

VOLUME XXXIII.--No. 65.

"Brooke, (Tampa Bay.) whoever he may be, with a
"speed, and limit the subsistence called for from Fort
"Drane according to the intention of those orders."
"Major-General Gaines, I presume, will have heard
"of the order which ought to take him to the Mexican
"frontier; if he should prefer to remain, he must obey
"my orders."
"Order No. 4 (of the same date) directs that General

Gaines's detachment should remain at Fort King until further orders; that current subsistence only should be issued to the detachment; directs that the peculiar boats believed to be at Payne's Landing, should be sent to [sic] lawla, (sic) to meet a steamer at the mouth of the Ochlockonee; receive subsistence; if the boats could not meet the troops were to march without delay, to Volusia on the St. John's, within 20,000 rations were to be about to go up in a steamer, and the detachment was enjoined not to attempt any offensive movement, except so far as might be necessary to carry into execution those my orders.

March 1st, I again wrote to Gen. Clinch: "I regretted

"Every point of view, the premature and unauthorized movement from Tampa Bay, by that General, [Gaines], and the very awkward and responsible position he has placed himself in by his subsequent march from Fort King." "In any event, the responsibility of his movement, or actual position, is his own, for he must have known as early as the 10th ultimo, if not before, that I had been charged with the general direction of the war in Florida, and that, by interfering, he constituted

himself an interloper. Even if you had sufficient stores and means of transportation, I should command you to send no subsistence to him, unless to prevent starvation; but you have neither. Let him, therefore, in time, extricate himself from the embarrassment he has placed himself in by marching upon Volusia, where I have no reason to doubt that 20,000 rations, sent hence, on the 27th ultimo, have safely arrived. As he appears to have his retreat open to him, or, in no peril, to prevent his taking that step, you, of course, will make no detachment to join him.

In a third letter, that I caused to be addressed to General Clinch, March 24, he was told: "If Major-General Gaines should fall back upon Fort King, or Drane, it is presumed that he will proceed to execute the orders of the Government, which will carry him to another quarter. In that event, you will be the senior officer, and are instructed by Major-General Scott to say that you are at liberty to detain the troops from Fort Brooke [Tampa] at either of the Forts mentioned—Drane and

A fourth letter on this subject, in part, was addressed by me to General Clinch, dated March 4th, in which is said:

"I still presume that Major-General Gaines will be obliged to fall back upon Fort Drane, which increases my anxiety to send the wagons, with some additions loaded. I would prefer, much, that the force brought with him were back at Tampa Bay, or, rather, that it had not marched from that place; provided that the movement fails to crush the enemy, or to terminate the war."

The worst result, next to the loss of that fine body of men, or a third of it, would be the mere success of driving the enemy into the lower country, where, I suppose, it would be almost impossible for us to follow; I mean, below the waters of Charlotte Harbor. Hence my indignation that an isolated attack should have been made, from your vicinity, well calculated to produce that result, and at a time when you knew, and Major-General Gaines must have known, through you, (and before) that my plan, with ample means, was to move simultaneously upon the Wytheville-see, in three col-

On— from Tampa Bay, the upper crossing on the Ochlocknee, and Fort Drake; so as to make it impossible for the enemy to escape into the lower country."

"I have not yet supposed that Major Gen. Gaines had not his retreat upon Forts Drake or King, perfectly in his power. On account of subsistence, if he can cut his way through the enemy to Tampa Bay, I much prefer that his force were there: and when I wished him to march, or send that force to Volusia, it was because it could be infinitely more easily subsisted there than at Fort Drake. Should he, however, be in any difficulty in operating a retreat, I should be glad to see him retreat upon Tampa Bay."

from the W. G. A. cabinet, I was many weeks
from any support that the slender means within your reach
may allow; and this, doubtless, you would render without
any special permission to that effect. If the force were
to Fort Drane or King, it must be subsisted for at least
five or six days upon means derived from this place, [P.
colate,] whence I now prefer that it should become a part
of the right wing, [your command,] rather than take the
quantity of subsistence, [from you,] and march back to
Tampa Bay."

And, finally, I caused a fifth letter to be written to
Gen. Clinch, March 6, on which will be found this para-

"Major-General Scott is exceedingly anxious to hear the result of the operations on the Wythlaocochee. The last intelligence from that quarter (through you) was only the 29th ultimo."

My reports on the same subject, addressed to the Adjutant-General for the information of Government, dated at Picolata, the 26th and 25th of February, March the 24 and 6th, are to the same effect, all showing the embarrassments and delay which the isolated movement from Tampa upon Fort King and the Wythlaocochee

In the notes of the 25th of February, after recapitulating many of the facts already brought into view, among them, the arrival of General Gaines at Fort King with 1,140 men, without bringing more rations than sufficed for his march, although he came from Tampa, where the amount of subsistence was great, after noticing his having drawn from Fort Drane nearly all the food for men collected there, together with the baggage train necessary to transport that subsistence to him at Fort King, and which train, in the whole, had been required at Picolata

to take further supplies to Fort Drane, the point nearest most difficult to supply in or about the whole theatre of operations, I add :

"It will be seen from the foregoing, that, to re-establish my plan of campaign, viz: to move simultaneously from Fort Drane (or Fort King.) from Volusia and Tampa, say about the 21th of March, the great difficulty will be to send supplies for the right wing [Clinch's command,] and the bad road from Picolata to Fort Drane, 60 miles, has, by a heavy rain, which has now been falling 46 hours, been rendered infinitely worse."

"By reference to the map, it will be seen that, even if Major-General Gaines could succeed in driving the enemy from the Wythlacoochee, there is no force to prevent the retreat below Charlotte harbor, or to any point in the lower [part of the] Peninsula. A small guard only was left [by him] at Tampa; Colonel Lindsay will not be in position in time, and General Eustis cannot cross the Ochlawaha earlier than the 13th or 15th instant. The retreat, it will be seen, is therefore open to the Indians, and it would be better for the nation to have been

In this point of view both, it was the interest of the Indians to drive Gen. Gaines than that he should drive them. The war, in fact, would be forwarded by his being forced back upon Forts Drake and King. In truth, according to his own showing, he ought to have fallen back on the evening of the 25th, or the morning of the 26th [of February]. The lives which he has lost have promoted no end. He must I think still fall back, and I wish to Heaven that it may be without further loss. Brigadier-General Clinch, from his present want of wagons, can send him no efficient reinforcements, and cannot be back from Picolata in four

and the wagons, the force with Major-General Gaines were now back at Tampa Bay, it would be in its true position; but he cannot retreat thither, for, it will be seen by his letters [enclosed] that he had not the means of passing the river [Wythlacoochee]. He found the enemy everywhere, and in the position the most favorable to us."

And on the 6th of March, I again write to the Adjutant-General, on the same subject, thus:

"No intelligence has been received of the movement

of Major-General Gaines, of a later date than his letter of the 20th ultimo, a copy of which has been forwarded. He cannot, therefore, have marched upon either Forts Drane or King, or have fallen back upon Veluzia. In either case, I should, doubtless, have received a further report of him from Brigadier-General Clinch. It may then be hoped that he has beaten the enemy, or, at least have succeeded in effecting his return to Tampa Bay. In this state of doubt and anxiety, I know not how long I may have to remain. Yet it is important that I should speedily learn what has become of his column, and pass

"I send no more troops for the present to Fort Drake on account of the difficulty of subsisting them there. Major-General Gaines shall not fall back on that point; it will be indispensable to wait for Captain Wharton [with his company of United States dragoons.] In the mean time it is easy to subsist the forces here and Gary's ferry."

The 9th of March I reported to Washington as follows: